The AP US History Exam

Friday, May 11, 2012 @ 8 AM

3 hours, 5 minutes of working time

Multiple Choice Section: 80 Questions - 55 Minutes

50% of the grade

Essay Section: 3 Essays - 2 hours and ten minutes

DBQ: Document Based Question – 22.5% of the grade – 15 minutes to organize, 45 minutes to write

FRQs: Free Response Questions – 27.5% of the grade, 13.25% each – 5 minutes to plan, 30 to write for each, choose one out of two pre-1865 and one out of two post-1865

Exam Grades:

5 – Extremely Well Qualified for Placement/Credit

4 – Well Qualified

3 – Qualified

2 – Possibly Qualified

1 – No Recommendation

The multiple-choice section tests students' factual knowledge, breadth of preparation, and knowledge-based analytical skills. The majority of multiple-choice questions are on the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Approximately 20 percent of the questions deal with the period from the first European explorations through 1789, 45 percent with the period 1790 through 1914, and 35 percent with the period 1915 to the present. There may be a few multiple-choice questions on the period since 1980.

Political institutions and behavior and public policy account for approximately 35 percent of the questions, and social and cultural developments account for approximately another 40 percent. The remaining questions are divided between the areas of diplomacy and international relations (15 percent) and economic developments (10 percent).

Typically, the grading is such that 60% correct on the multiple choice section earns the student a 3 for that half of the exam.

Standard essay questions may require students to relate developments in different areas, analyze common themes in different time periods, or compare individual or group experiences that reflect socioeconomic, ethnic, racial, or gender differences.

Essays are graded from 0 to 9. The 8-9 essay has a well-developed, clearly focused thesis statement that addresses the question. It is organized and well written, presents in-depth analysis beyond simply factual reporting, connects relevant historical information, provides specific examples and supports the thesis statement throughout.